

D' thereof, may travel past the tools 16 suspended on either or both trackways to transport or perform on work at any location along the line without colliding with any of the tools or machines provided adjacent the conveyor. Accordingly, the bridge crane 78 may serve to transport work or assemblies from machine to machine or to select machines for effecting operations thereon. In certain instances a plurality of cranes 78 may be used to supplement or replace the conveyor 75 and may travel the entire length of the line or transfer finished work from the line.

IN THE DRAWINGS:

To avoid duplicative numerals, in Fig. 8, delete numeral "86" and change numeral "81" to --88--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the following claims, to ensure that they are not subject to the rules of 35 U.S.C. § 112(6):

56 (Amended) An automatic production system comprising in combination:

D3 (a) a conveyor [that supports and carries] supporting and carrying a plurality of pallets in a given direction along a select path defining a production line, each pallet holding at least one unit of work,

(b) a plurality of production tools disposed adjacent to said conveyor [that] and structured to perform different programmed operations on different units of work conveyed thereto on said pallets,

(c) a plurality of pallet transfer devices, [each operable] located adjacent to said conveyor so as to transfer a pallet from said conveyor to dispose it and the work it holds adjacent to at least one selected production tool,

(d) a securing device at each tool [that engages and holds] structured to engage and hold a pallet at a predetermined location with respect to said tool

and to dispose the work held by the pallet in a fixed position with respect to the tool, [thereby enabling] within operating range of the tool [to perform respective operations on said work], and

(e) a controller [that generates] structured to generate and selectively [addresses] address command control messages to control selected pallet transfer devices, securing devices, and production tools: (1) to transfer selected of said pallets to selected of said tools, and (2) to perform selected programmed operations on selected work supported by said selected pallets.

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57. (Amended) An automatic production system in accordance with Claim 56 wherein said controller is also [operable] structured to control the operations of a plurality of said tools to permit each of said selected tools to simultaneously operate on work presented thereto on said pallets.

58. (Amended) An automatic production system in accordance with Claim 56 wherein said securing device comprises respective pallet clamping devices [operable to engage and hold said pallets in a fixed position with respect to respective of said tools].

59. (Amended) An automatic production system in accordance with Claim 58 wherein said controller is a master controller [that] further configured to [controls] control the operations of said securing devices to cause them to hold pallets and to fixedly position work held by said pallets with respect to an associated tool and to release the pallets to permit the pallets and work to be transferred from the associated securing device to said conveyor.

60. (Amended) An automatic production system in accordance with Claim 56 wherein said controller is a remote controller [that is operable to] located remotely [control the operation of respective of] from said pallet transfer devices and [its] their associated [tool] tools [to predeterminately perform operations on work held by a pallet, and to transfer pallets between the securing device of each tool and said conveyor].

Remarks

Figures 6 through 8 of the present specification have been carried forward in the specification, without break in continuity, since March 12, 1968, when applicant filed application Serial No. 712,443, which issued as U.S. Patent 3,559,256. At the same time in 1968, applicant included in the specification a further detailed description of those figures, which can be seen in columns 18-20 of the referenced patent. However, when applicant filed continuation-in-part application 05/107,357, on January 18, 1971, his attorney shortened the description of Figures 6-8. For all practical purposes, this application has the same specification as the 1971 specification and includes the shortened description.

As explained below, applicant submits the above amendments to the specification to better conform the text to the drawings, which have been carried through continuously. A few amendments to correct minor matters are included.

Applicant notes that the "written description" requirement of Section 112(1) is satisfied even if *only* a drawing disclosed a particular claimed feature. See Vas-Cath Inc. v. Mahurkas, 935 F.2d 1555, 19 U.S.P.Q.2d 1111 (Fed. Cir. 1991) (an application for a design patent, which contains no textual description, may nevertheless qualify as a parent under Section 120, assuming the drawings of that application show the invention claimed in a subsequent utility-patent application, because the drawings are sufficient

written description under Section 112(1)). The point is confirmed by 37 C.F.R. § 1.118(a), which clarifies that disclosure in “at least one” of the textual matter, the drawings, or the claims is sufficient to support amendments of the other two.

Rule 117 instructs applicants: “The specification...must be amended and revised when required...to secure correspondence between the claims, the specification and the drawing.” To amplify such correspondence, applicant has presented the above amendments to the specification.

To avoid any argument that the description of Figures 6-8 in the amendment constitutes new matter that applicant recently learned, applicant has taken the description of those figures from the specification filed on applicant’s assumed priority date under Section 120, namely Serial No. 712,443, filed March 12, 1968, which issued as U.S. Patent 3,559,256. Specifically, applicant has copied, with only minor grammatical or typographical revisions, the text at column 18, line 27 through column 20, line 53 of the ‘256 Patent. As all of that material was submitted on March 12, 1968, and as the section describes Figures 6-8, which were included in both this application and the application that led to the ‘256 Patent, the material is not new matter. See Sun Products Group, Inc. v. B & E Sales Co., 700 F. Supp. 366, 378 (E.D. Mich. 1988) (in evaluating the “written description” requirement, “The test is whether the original disclosure reasonably conveys to the artisan that the inventor had possession at the earlier time of the later claimed subject matter”) (citation omitted).

Applicant here plainly had possession of the material in the amendment here, and he continued the drawings associated with that material throughout the chain of applications between the ‘256 Patent and this application.

Applicant notes that, in the companion ‘414 and ‘415 cases, he had presented the same amendment and had been faced with a “new matter” rejection. However,